

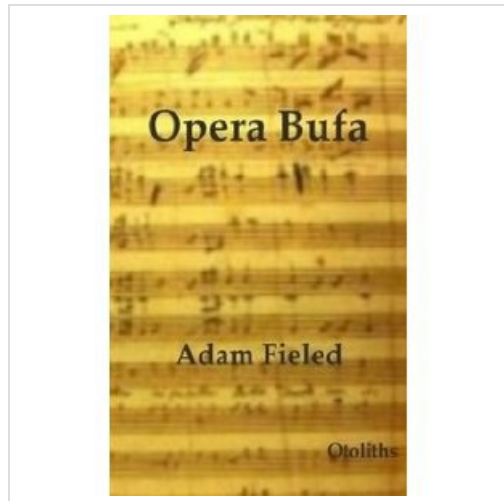
Fieled's Miscellaneous

The One remains...



on being influential in literature in America

Posted on [September 28, 2012](#)



Those who follow me on Facebook know that an incident happened a few days ago involving me being blatantly ripped off. It was by an old-school New York poet who I've never met. Part of what he published was a paraphrased version of the contents of my first book, "Opera Bufo." This paraphrase was quoted in a review of his book in a conservative New England journal, and the journal neglected to mention the theft. It made me think about what it means to be influential in literature in America in 2012 (or any time). American society is highly competitive, in the arts as in everything else- artists in America have a strong ego drive to win, to conquer. If that means begging, borrowing, or stealing, so be it. "Opera Bufo" is structured so that there are a wide number of allusions and tiny thefts- from everyone from T.S. Eliot and Wordsworth to Buffalo Springfield. But the book was written in a spirit of innovation- the style and structure of the book are unique. To have this style and structure co-opted, without being acknowledged, either by the author or reviewers, is a statement about America, about clannishness and competitiveness, and about generations. It's impossible for me to say, with any veracity, that the old guard in American poetry are washed up; that would imply lost artistic strength, and for me there was never any artistic strength there to begin with. The old guard in American poetry are duffers. To exert artistic influence on them, if you are not part of the charmed circle, is to be pick-pocketed. If they have a sense of entitlement about pick-pocketing, it may be because many of them are from privileged backgrounds, and never particularly rose above the status of spoiled brats. I wish I could open a wider vista about literary influence in America, but, as of 2012, this is my report from the front-lines. Hopefully, with other vistas being opened, things may change slowly from here.

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